

SECTION IV

PART F REGIONAL EDUCATION PROVIDER (REP)

1.00 Introduction

This policy applies to all elements of the regional education provider as intended in Colorado Statute that authorizes Adams State College, Fort Lewis College, Mesa State College and Western State College to function as regional educational providers. AS REGIONAL EDUCATION PROVIDERS, these schools will *“have as their primary goal the assessment of regional educational needs and, in consultation with the Colorado Commission on Higher Education, the allocation of resources for the purposes of meeting those needs”* (C.R.S. 23-1-127) Regional education providers will focus their attention on a geographical area defined in collaboration with the Colorado Commission on Higher Education. The designation of regional education provider does not change or alter existing statutory responsibilities assigned to the Commission, public colleges and universities, nor does it expand or diminish the degree and certificate program authority of existing public two-year colleges, vocational schools or four-year colleges.

2.00 Statutory Authority

Commission has broad statutory authority that is intended to maintain the quality of education and insure access for the citizens of Colorado:

“The commission shall set policies, after consultation with the governing boards of the institutions, which define which courses and programs taught outside of the geographic boundaries of the campus may be eligible for general fund support. The commission may include funding for those courses and programs in its system-wide funding recommendations to the general assembly.”

Other applicable statutory language:

“The commission shall define, after consultation with the governing boards of institutions the geography and programmatic service areas for each state-supported institution of higher education. No such institution shall provide instruction off-campus in programs or in geographic areas or at sites not approved by the commission, unless otherwise provided by law.”

C.R.S. 23-52-101

(1) There is hereby established a college at Durango, to be known as Fort Lewis College, which shall be a public liberal arts college, with moderately selective admission standards with a historic and continuing commitment to Native American education. In addition, the college may offer professional programs and a limited number of graduate programs to serve regional needs. The Center

of Southwest Studies provides a valuable regional, national, and international resource.

(2) (a) Fort Lewis College shall be a regional education provider and shall have two-year authority which shall be utilized in collaboration with a community college and any area vocational school.

(b) The Colorado Commission on Higher Education shall, in consultation with the Board of Trustees of Fort Lewis College, establish the criteria for designation as a regional education provider.

C.R.S. 23-1-127

(a) The Colorado Commission on Higher Education can better serve the citizens of this state by providing oversight and direction for the provision of regional education at Adams State College, Mesa State College, and Western State College; and

(b) As regional education providers, Adams State College, Mesa State College, and Western State College of Colorado shall have as their primary goal the assessment of regional educational needs and, in consultation with the Colorado Commission on Higher Education, the allocation of resources for the purposes of meeting those needs.

(2) A regional education provider's initiatives to meet its regional needs may include, but need not be limited to, the following:

(a) extension of existing programs;

(b) creation of new undergraduate programs;

(c) development of partnerships with two-year institutions; and

(d) facilitation of the delivery of graduate education through existing graduate institutions.

(3) The Colorado Commission on Higher Education shall, in consultation with Adams State College, Mesa State College, and Western State College of Colorado, establish the criteria for designation as a regional education provider.

3.00 Goals and Criteria

3.01 Policy Goals

The purpose of the policy is to assess the educational need of defined geographic regions, provide access to programs that address those needs, insure that the regional provider and its higher education partners in the region have the ability to import needed academic programs and provide reasonable and appropriate funding options to implement and support the programs. These goals will be accomplished within existing statute and Commission policy.

3.02 Scope

An academic program is defined to include:

- CCHE approved associate, baccalaureate, and graduate degree programs,
- Colorado Community College System (CCCS) approved certificate programs,
- Degree completion program, i.e., the courses required to complete the major of a specific CCHE approved degree,
- Certificate of completion that is a part of a CCHE approved degree program, and

In discharging their roles, regional educational providers may assess programs or initiatives that enhance educational opportunity, develop the cultural capital, or promote the economic development in the geographic region.

4.00 Process and Procedures

4.01 Advisory Council

Each regional education provider will establish an *advisory council* that represents significant stakeholders from the designated region. The size and composition of the council will be determined by the institution; but, minimally the council will include the President or his/her designee, and the institution's Statewide Extended Campus administrator and the Presidents of the public higher education institutions within its region. Meeting agenda and minutes will be included in the regional education provider's annual report to the CCHE.

4.02 Needs Assessment

Each regional education provider shall develop a plan to assess the undergraduate and graduate educational needs of its service area and involve the advisory council that represents the significant stakeholders of the designated region. This council assists the REP in ascertaining the educational needs of the region and, relying on relevant and available data to the extent possible, shall work collaboratively with the regional education provider to develop feasible proposals to meet those needs.

In addition, the advisory council, working in conjunction with the president or designee of the regional education provider, shall also hear requests from constituent groups for the development or delivery of specific programs. The provider and its council shall determine the feasibility of these proposals and, when possible, shall develop or deliver the requested programs. If the provider cannot develop or deliver a feasible program, the regional education provider shall negotiate with other institutions to develop or deliver the program.

The regional education provider, working in conjunction with the advisory council, shall to assess the effectiveness of the programs it delivers.

4.03 Funding Options

Regional education providers need to consider the full range of funding options, recognizing that the primary goal is to provide affordable educational opportunities while also recovering expenses associated with the delivery of the program and to be able to assure students that if they begin a program, the provider will be able to complete the program within a reasonable period of time.

The regional education provider may use three available options to support its proposed programs:

1. The regional education provider may report the FTE for enrollment funding in any of its approved programs, certificates of completion or discrete courses offered to matriculated students within their defined geographical region.
2. The regional education provider may offer programs on a cash-funded basis, establishing tuition levels that are market-driven, using all options currently available through the cash-funded portion of the Statewide Extended Campus.
3. If a regional education provider invites another state institution to deliver an academic program within its region, the guest institution may report the FTE for funding.

4.04 Determining Regional Education Provider Geographical Boundaries

Regional education providers and the other appropriate public higher education institutions in collaboration with the Colorado Commission on Higher Education will define an appropriate geographical region to be served ([Appendix N](#)). **It is understood that the geographical area defined for a regional provider will not supplant the service area for two-year colleges and postsecondary schools offering vocational programs.** To avoid program duplication and to maximize access, regional providers will work collaboratively with the two-year institutions whose service areas overlap the geographical boundaries of the regional provider. Subject to CCHE approval, four-year institutions with a statewide mission shall not be precluded from offering FTE generating programs in any service area, so long as the institutional provider works collaboratively with the appropriate REP. Similarly, the designation of regional education provider does not authorize an institution to restrict another public institution from offering an approved CCHE academic program on a cash-funded basis or a CCHE approved off-campus state-funded program, but the offering institutions shall notify the regional education provider in a timely manner as specified in 4.04.01 below.

4.04.01 Framework for Geographical Boundaries

The four public institutions designated to be Regional Educational Providers (Adams State College, Fort Lewis College, Mesa State College and Western State College) will meet with Commission staff to suggest the boundaries for their respective geographical regions. The Commission in conjunction with appropriate public higher education institutions will determine the geographical regions by considering the regional origin of institutional enrollments; political and

economic regions as defined by existing governmental entities; “common sense” boundaries that reflect tradition, geography, and distance; and the current capacity and past performance of institutions to serve off-campus constituents in a given area. The purpose of these boundaries is threefold: 1) to assign primary responsibility to a particular REP to survey the educational needs of an area and, where feasible, to meet those needs through its own programs or with the programs of other appropriate public institutions; 2) to eliminate unnecessary educational duplication; and 3) to assist the interested public in identifying which REP it should approach to communicate its educational needs or concerns.

The Commission, working collaboratively with the REPs, may, where prudent, permit some flexibility and overlap in boundaries to enhance the likelihood that the educational needs of Colorado citizens are met.

In addition, the delineation of boundaries does not necessarily “close” the region to another public institution that wishes to offer a program on a cash-funded basis or a CCHE approved off-campus state-funded program. A public institution that exercises that cash-funded option will be required to notify the CCHE. The Commission shall resolve disputes over boundaries and conflicts resulting from cash-funded initiatives.

4.05 Brokering Programs

When the regional education provider does not offer the desired or needed four-year or advanced degree, the regional provider shall broker with another Colorado public or in-state accredited private institution to provide the program. The most effective delivery method (i.e., site-based, web-based) may be used to accommodate student need.

When the regional provider determines that a two-year or less advanced program is needed or desired, the regional provider shall direct that request to a community college within its defined region, an area vocational school or to the Colorado Community College System. If it is not possible to meet the need, then the Regional Provider shall consult with Commission staff to determine how to meet the need.

4.06 Public Information

Each regional provider will develop a public information strategy that effectively communicates within the designated region the availability of increased access to college programs. Minimally, institutions should indicate REP programs in their class schedules and should include REP information, where appropriate, in its publications. All enrollments will be reported consistent with all existing CCHE policies.

4.07 Role and Mission

If an institution feels that its approved "role and mission" is being constrained by the academic programs developed by a Regional Education Provider, the institution may request a review by the CCHE.

5.00 Annual Report

Each regional education provider will annually submit by October 1 to the Commission through its governing board an annual report that includes the following information. Where feasible and appropriate, the CCHE shall align the reporting for regional education provider initiatives with existing institutional reporting requirements.

The report will minimally include the following information.

- An executive summary narrative that describes the work of the regional education provider during the just completed fiscal year.
- Identification of each program offered through the designation of regional provider.
 - Identification of the providing institution.
 - Identification of the course(s) offered.
 - Enrollment in each course.
 - Number of students who completed the course.
 - Instructor identification (full-time, adjunct).
 - Number of students who completed the program, i.e., earned a degree or certificate.
- A Financial report
 - Revenues generated
 - Tuition
 - Fees
 - General Fund
- Expenses
 - Cost of Instruction
 - Cost of Administration
 - Cost of Space
 - Cost of Technology
 - Travel
 - Other operating Expenses. (identify)
- Recommended changes or improvements for the regional education provider program.